• 171 In matters of religion the Nkundó recognize the existence of a Supreme Being: Nkakombe or Mbombifindf, creator and ruler of all that exists. They do not worship him in any way, however; all their religious practices are addressed to guardian and ancestral spirits. (2)

2. On the subject of the religious conceptions of the Nkundó, see a detailed study by Father Boelaert, M.S.C., in Hooger Leven, 1934, pp. 1612 and 1636, and 1935, pp. 12 and 68.

197 The language of the Nkundó is beautiful, harmonious, flexible, and rich. It has all the qualities needed to become a literary language and is admirably suited to the requirements of teaching. Furthermore, its various dialects are spoken over a considerably large territory, in fact over one of the largest language areas [18] of the Congo. In addition to the religious and devotional books of the 197 Catholic mission, a fairly large collection of various academic text- 214 books is available in this language, thanks primarily to the zeal of the Protestant missionaries. The latter have also published a complete translation of the Bible, several vocabularies and small grammars have been compiled, and in recent years a large dictionary and an expanded grammar have been added to these, both compiled by A. and L. Rankin of the Bongandanga Mission. For several years the Protestant mission at Bolenge has been publishing a native magazine, and the Catholic mission is pushing ahead with preparations to publish one also.

164 Father Hulstaert's book, Vollblutneger und Halbneger, includes a chapter on the Nkundó in which the author gives a good general description of this people. Nevertheless, some of the details given must be accepted with reservations.

121 The general information given above is enough to give the reader a superficial knowledge of the Nkundó.

The purpose of this work is to give a more extensive account of their institutions pertaining to marriage.

As we have previously stated, we are considering only a portion of this people. All our statements cover only the fraction we have delimited. The family institutions of other Nkundó groups are not accounted for, as they are less known to us and we do not want